

West Upper Peninsula Citizen Advisory Council

Regular Meeting

Wednesday, October 22, 2008

6:30-8:30 p.m.

Catherine Bonifas Civic Center

225 North 21st Street, Escanaba, Michigan

Minutes

WUP CAC Members Present:

Donald Britton

Marcy Cella

Shawn Hagan

Fred "Mick" Jarvi

Lorana Jinkerson

David Johnson

Martin Johnson

George Lindquist

Rory Mattson

G. Dale McNamee

Chauncey Moran

James Schmierer

Robert "Skip" Schulz

Warren Suchovsky

Philip Wirtanen

WUP CAC Members Absent:

Floyd Dropps

Pete Jandro

Marvin Roberson

Dennis Stachewicz, Jr.

Department of Natural Resources Staff Present:

Tom Courchaine, Acting Upper Peninsula Field Deputy, Marquette

Craig Albright, Wildlife Division, Escanaba

Mike Herman, Fisheries, Escanaba

Rich Hill, Parks and Recreation, Marquette

Jessica Mistak, Fisheries, Marquette

Lt. Tim Robson, Law Enforcement Division, Marquette

Steve Scott, Fisheries, Lake Superior Basin Coordinator, Newberry

Eric Thompson, Forest, Mineral and Fire Management (FMFM), Escanaba

Penny Bacon, Executive Division, Marquette

The West Upper Peninsula (WUP) Citizen Advisory Council (CAC) was called to order at 6:35 p.m. by Tom Courchaine. Jessica Mistak will be facilitating tonight's meeting.

Tom Courchaine reminded the Council that the CAC Charter is a guiding document. He encouraged the Council to review the Charter. He also made note to the public audience that the Charter is available on the DNR web site.

Tom announced the resignation of Dean Hulce, Safari Club International. Dean has accepted a new job that will take him out of state. We will be filling his spot on the CAC.

Tom told the members if they want to be added to the email list to receive Natural Resources Commission (NRC) minutes and agendas along with the DNR Wire service to please contact Teresa Gloden.

Tom asked the CAC if they would like to consider student representation on the Council. If so, perhaps the Universities could provide student nominees from their fish and game programs.

Tom said there is a forest certification process in Michigan. Michigan state forests are certified by two external groups. Every year an audit is conducted and part of the audit process is to sample groups. We have provided the auditors with your contact information. The auditors may be contacting you for comments and your involvement with the CAC's.

Tom mentioned George Lindquist asked for a NRC topics list. Fisheries and Wildlife Divisions provide the NRC with a schedule of topics each year. When the schedule is completed, Tom will provide a copy to the CAC.

Tom said Warren Suchovsky had suggested that Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) be an agenda item at a CAC meeting. There is a CWD open house meeting scheduled for tomorrow night at Lakeview Arena in Marquette to discuss issues and what we've done so far.

Steve Scott asked if the Council had any questions regarding the two fisheries proposals; the three rod limit and changing the bag limit for salmon from three to five. There were no questions or comments from the CAC.

Adoption of Agenda:

Since a few CAC members were arriving late the Council moved the bylaws from the top to the bottom of old business and added a CWD presentation as an agenda topic and student representation on the Council to new business. Dave Johnson made a motion to support the changes in the agenda. Marcy Cella supported the motion. Motion passed.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes:

Marty Johnson made a motion to accept the minutes. Skip Schulz supported the motion. Dave Johnson moved to pass the motion. Mick Jarvi supported passing the motion. Motion passed.

Public Comment:

Jessica Mistak explained the rules for public comment. Each person who filled out a public comment card will have three minutes to provide comments.

Dave Schwalbach has property in the commercial forest reserve (CFR) program and has a gate on both ends of his road but he welcomes walk-in hunters. His gate and lock has been vandalized, has had large bait piles on his property, and has even been told to

leave. He would like the public to be informed of CFR rules and to respect private property.

Tom Courchaine advised Mr. Schwalbach to contact the Law Enforcement Division (LED). They will respond to land owner complaints. LED can work bait piles for litter or trespass violations. Tom also said the CFR rules are explained in the hunting guide.

Jack Herrick thinks the CAC's are a great idea. He said any recommendations made to the NRC should be followed up on and should have some teeth in it. He would like support for the non-industrial land owners program. Representative Lahti and Senator McManus supported to keep the program going but the DNR lobbied the Governor to line-item veto the funding twice. Mindy Koch said the DNR could only look at one percent of the non-industrial private land; the rest of land is being neglected. The Conservation Districts could handle all of this land if they had the funding. Mr. Herrick said the DNR has lots of funding, like the 10 million dollars.

Chuck Farrell would like to know why the mute swans were shot. He thinks mute swans are beautiful and graceful. He would like information on a plan for the mute swan. **Craig Albright** said the DNR has a systematic program in place. The mute swan displaces ducks and geese, attacks boaters and jet skiers. Last spring we jumped on this before they were out of control and it's very clear the public disagrees with this approach. We are now in a monitoring mode.

Tim Kobasic said in 2004 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services planned to reduce the mute swan population by 85 percent with the remaining to be clipped, neutered and relocated to viewing parks such as Seney Wildlife refuge. They don't want a breeding population. If we don't control mute swans it will end up just like the cormorants. Mute swans are not endangered and they are not protected. He agrees there was a failure to communicate.

Staff Reports:

Eric Thompson, management unit supervisor, Escanaba, FMFM. The compartment reviews are completed for Baraga, Escanaba, and Crystal Falls for the 2010 year of entry (YOE). The Gwinn Management Unit's compartment review is scheduled for November 7 and their open house is scheduled for October 23 from 3-7 p.m. at the Sand Township Hall. Inventory is getting started on the 2011 YOE compartments. The Division is working on compiling the timber sale acres for fiscal year 2008; final numbers should be available for the next meeting. Comments on the management areas for the WUP Forest Management plan were due on October 12. All of the comments received are now being reviewed.

Mike Herman, Fisheries gave a presentation on splake management in Lake Michigan. The presentation provided background and historical information on splake. Because of the very low return rates of stocked fish, high rearing cost and the negative genetic impacts that splake have shown to exhibit, we recommended that splake stocking in Lake Michigan be discontinued immediately. When they become available, we would substitute brown trout for splake at Escanaba and Cedar River, with approximately 40,000 at each site. These recommendations do not impact the current inland lake

splake stocking program. Mike also noted, the brown trout has a better yield and is less expensive to rear.

Discussions continued on hatchery space, where and when to plant fish, and reproduction costs.

In order to make an informed decision the Council requested to have information on agenda topics a week in advance. They also requested that items needing decisions from the Council be presented as "information only" at the first meeting and as an action item at the next meeting. A motion was made to table their decision until the next meeting. Marcy Cella supported the motion. Motion passed.

Old Business:

By-laws Article III Council Membership, Section 2: Substitutes:

Tom Courchaine said the selection process looked at the individual experience, variety of interests, and experience in public policy. If substitutes are allowed that lessens the integrity of the selection process. We are okay with voting by absentee ballot or a CAC member can tell another CAC member how they intend to vote. Or we can go through the selection process and have 2 or 3 substitutes, the substitutes then would attend meetings for absent members. We really need to pay attention and follow the CAC charter.

Warren Suchovsky said he would like to avoid proxy votes unless they are in writing. The CAC can amend the by-laws if it becomes an issue. A motion was made to accept Article III, Section 2 as written. Mick Jarvi supported the motion. Motion passed.

Shawn Hagan suggested amending Article III Council Membership, Section 4: Terms – Council members shall serve for terms of two to four... by striking "~~two to~~." A motion was made to support the change. George Lindquist supported the motion. Motion passed.

Discussion on Earthworms:

Marcy Cella said earthworms are invasive and exotic. Earthworms can eat a layer of top soil thus causing erosion. Marcy feels the public needs to be educated and she would like a warning sticker required on earthworm containers warning the public not to release the earthworms. Marcy added that the U.S. Geological Survey wants to be notified when an area is found that has no vegetation. Mike Herman provided a handout on the Ecological Consequences of Exotic Earthworm Invasions: Forest Decline Syndrome by Cindy Hale, University of Minnesota.

Marty Johnson suggested a sign "do not dump your earthworms" be posted at public access sites. **Tom Courchaine** added that we could print a warning in the fishing guide and have it posted on our web site. Tom said he would discuss internally and bring back the information to the Council.

Senior Citizen ORV Ride and 5th Grade Youth Day:

Skip Schulz provided a hand-out on the Senior Citizen ORV ride for information. Any other group or organization interested in doing something like this, please contact Skip for more information. Skip also provided information on a 5th grade outdoors day. This

program would similar to a program in Wisconsin that targets inner city kids. The September CAC meeting was held at the Ford Center in Alberta. Alberta has all of the facilities needed to host an outdoors day.

Discussion ensued on the youth day. It was noted that numerous organizations have similar days set aside for youth including U.S. Forest Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Wildlife Unlimited, Michigan State University (MSU) Extension, Delta County. All of these programs and out reach efforts are beneficial to exposing and involving youth in the outdoors.

Tom Courchaine added getting youth involved is also a priority to the DNR. We have lowered the hunting age and created the apprentice license for adults and youths who have never hunted before. Our state parks could be a venue for a youth day.

Jessica Mistak asked the CAC if this was a topic where they would want to form a sub-committee. The CAC decided to bring printed information for discussion at the next meeting.

Lorana Jinkerson explained the Google group she created for the WUP-CAC. She asked the members if they would like to add DNR staff and the EUP-CAC to the group. The WUP-CAC decided since the EUP-CAC is creating their own email account they could share information with the new EUP- CAC email account. The WUP-CAC email address will be posted on the DNR web site so the public can contact the CAC.

New Business

Election of Officers:

Facilitator: Warren Suchovsky nominated Dave Johnson. Chauncey Moran nominated Warren Suchovsky. Don Britton nominated Shawn Hagan. George Lindquist nominated Marty Johnson. A motion was made to close the nomination process. Don Britton supported the motion. Motion passed.

The person who receives the most votes will be the elected facilitator and the person receiving the second most votes will be the co-facilitator. Marcy Cella made a motion to accept the voting process. Don Britton supported the motion. Motion passed. Votes were tallied with Warren Suchovsky elected as facilitator. There was a tie for co-facilitator. A revote for co-facilitator was taken, results tallied, Dave Johnson was elected as the co-facilitator.

The CAC decided to extend this meeting until 9:00 p.m.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 16 from 6:30-8:30 p.m. in Houghton. The meeting location will be determined.

Agenda Development:

Tom said the CAC needs to decide how they want to develop their agenda and timelines for submitting topics. The CAC decided to table the agenda development until the next meeting. In the meantime, Warren Suchovsky, Dave Johnson and Tom Courchaine will meet to discuss the agenda development.

Crossbow Permits for Hunters with Certain Temporary Disabilities:

George Lindquist asked the CAC to support the NRC to seek Legislative authority to allow the DNR to issue crossbow permits for hunters with certain temporary disabilities. There are two bills introduced to allow for temporary crossbow permits. Also, Representative Joel Sheltroun has introduced a bill to allow the use of crossbows in any season and has given verbal support for the Department's efforts.

Tom Courchaine made note of the handout provided to the CAC on the crossbow survey being conducted on-line available on the DNR Website. **Mick Jarvi** asked if the use of crossbows was open to everyone. **Rory Mattson** feels this will bring people back to hunting by allowing the use of cross bows. **George Lindquist** explained this is not the intent; this is just to support the NRC to be able to issue temporary permits. Tom will provide copies of the two bills to the Council. A motion was made to support the legislation to issue crossbow permits to hunters with certain temporary disabilities. The motion was supported by Skip Schulz. Motion passed.

Tim Kobasic said any increase in the general use of crossbows add credibility to the legislative committee. **Warren Suckovsky** asked how we follow through with our support. **Tom Courchaine** said the group needs to decide how to make recommendations. The CAC decided on a letter of support. Tom Courchaine asked Penny Bacon to draft a letter of support from the CAC to the bill sponsors. The draft letter will be emailed to the CAC members and they will have 5 days to comment.

Rory Mattson requested his agenda topic - Upper Michigan Non-Industrial Land Owner Resources be tabled to the next meeting.

Student Representation on the CAC:

Discussion ensued on having student representation on the CAC. Some of the questions asked: does this create a problem with the Charter, does the Director support student representation, how many students should be on the CAC, should they have voting power, and can they miss meetings. It was decided to have one student with voting power. **Tom Courchaine** will contact the Universities to request student nominees from their natural resources curriculum.

The CAC decided to have an informational CWD presentation at the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.